

Risk Assessment and Management P10

FOCUS ON DIOXINS

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The mission of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) is to prevent or mitigate adverse human health effects and diminished quality of life associated with exposure to hazardous substances from waste sites, unplanned releases, and other sources of pollution present in the environment. In that capacity, ATSDR addresses the potential health impacts of numerous chemicals through its various programs.

Total chlorinated dibenzo-*p*-dioxins (CDDs) are found in at least 110 of 1,428 National Priorities List sites identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The best known representative of the group, 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzo-*p*-dioxin (TCDD), was found at 81 sites. To inform the public about dioxins and to optimize agency's decisions regarding public health practice at dioxin-contaminated sites, ATSDR has published such documents as Toxicological Profile for CDDs (1989, 1997), Case Studies in Environmental Medicine: Dioxin Toxicity (1990), Dioxin and Dioxin-Like Compounds in Soil: ATSDR Interim Policy Guideline and Technical Support Document (1997), and ToxFAQs fact sheet (1997). Further, the Dioxin Subregistry is one of three chemical-specific subregistries that compose ATSDR's National Exposure Registry, which was established to assess the long-term health consequences of chronic, low-level exposure. Currently, information on 250 individuals is being tracked. ATSDR conducted about 228 consultations at 59 hazardous waste sites and 64 health assessments at 96 hazardous waste sites that had exposure to CDDs as a component of total exposure to site contaminants. ATSDR is also conducting or sponsoring several health outcome studies in populations exposed to CDDs.

References.

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